

Remarks

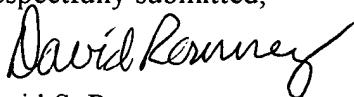
Claims 2 and 4-12 were allowed on the previous action.

Allowable claims 16 - 18 have been rewritten in independent form to include all limitations of the base claim 13 (there are no intervening claims), and are therefore also in condition for allowance.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the analysis and basis for rejecting claims 13-15 under Section 102(b) as being anticipated by the Toshio JP reference. However in order to advance this case to issuance, claims 14 and 15 are amended to be dependent upon allowable claim 17, and claim 13 has been canceled without prejudice. In that regard applicants reserve the right to pursue such canceled and/or rejected claims in other divisional/continuation applications.

In view of all the foregoing, it is believed that all of the remaining claims 2, 4-12, and 14-18 are now in condition for allowance, notice of which is earnestly requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: 17 February 2004